ON THE POLICY OF THE
FUTURE IN INDIA.
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THE POLICY OF THE FUTURE IN INDIA.

A LETTER

TO THE

RIGHT HON. LORD CRANBORNE,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

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BY

WILLIAM KNIGHTON, LL.D.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER IN OUDH

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THE

POLICY OF THE FUTURE

IN

INDIA

THE WORLD is moving on apace, and we with it: nothing is standing still. Even India, the land of old associations, old habits, caste, and a superstition only worthy of consideration because it is venerable, is moving on. It is the duty, therefore, of all who have anything to do with India, to enquire whither it is moving, in what way, towards what results, and with what surroundings. Every Englishman has something, more or less, to do with India. The responsibility of good government, the keeping of the national faith, the obligation to do our best for India, is imposed upon all Englishmen, and there is not one who can shirk this responsibility without shirking his duty. It is the duty of every educated Englishman, therefore, to endeavour to understand the questions presenting themselves constantly about India.

But if this duty is incumbent on every educated Englishman, how much more upon those who directly or indirectly aid in governing India!

You, my Lord, are the head of that government. If anyone has anything worth saying on the subject of Indian government, to whom shall he carry it but to your Lordship? An experience of many years in India, an intimate acquaintance with the people, and much reflection on the present aspect of affairs, have all combined to impress upon my mind the conviction that I have something to say on this subject worth listening to; and at last I have determined to say it. Whether my conviction is rightly or wrongly founded, few, if any, will be better able to judge than your Lordship.

Great changes are at present taking place in India —great and violent changes. The civilisation of the nineteenth century, active, intrusive, and revolutionising, has been brought in India face to face with the old, effete, stand-still semi-civilisation of a people wedded to old forms, with whom custom is synonymous with duty, and a novelty with an evil. This new, intrusive, revolutionising civilisation of Western Europe is not now confined, as formerly, to a few roads, a few towns, a few military stations. It stretches along from village to village and hamlet to hamlet, in iron lines of railroads, all over the country. It has raised up new modes of life, new principles of action, new ideas; and all these are seething and boiling, as it were, together throughout the entire country, from Cape Comorin to the

Himalayas, from Peshawur to Dacca. Minds are roused; intellects that would otherwise be dormant or inert, are active and enquiring. The old are asking, How will this all end? The young are asking, When will the beginning of the end come? For things cannot remain as they are: there must be a revolution of some kind—bloody, destructive, overturning all law and order, it might be; but a revolution according to law, peaceful, headed by the Government and the lawmakers, it may be. And it is to aid in securing this latter result that I have had the boldness to address your Lordship.

I shall be accused of presumption. I shall be told that neither my position nor my capabilities warrant my doing so. My reply is, that I lived in Ceylon and Calcutta for seven years and a half, constantly meeting and conversing with the native aristocracy, and that therefore I know something of their feelings, aspirations, and expectations; and that for six years and a half I have lived in Oudh, exercising the powers of a Magistrate, of a Justice of the Peace, of a Collector of Revenue, coming into constant connection with the mass of the people, high and low, and therefore becoming more or less intimately acquainted with their habits of life, and their impressions of the men and things and events around them. I have endeavoured to observe much and to reflect much, and these are my excuses for troubling your Lordship now.

The causes operating in India to produce and establish changes are numerous, but five of them may

be enumerated here as of prominent importance in causing innovation in the manners and habits of the people:—

1st. The depreciation in the value of money.
2nd. The construction of railways, and consequent enhancement of the value of daily labour.
3rd. The spread of enlightenment and education, uprooting the foundations of Hindûism.
4th. The antagonism of Mohammedanism to Christianity and Christians, which is daily becoming more and more virulent.
5th. The spread of a principle of nationality unknown before throughout all India.

I. In India everything is attributed to the Government. If the supply of rain is less than usual—if too much rain falls, and the crops are injured—if destruction is caused by locusts, by floods, by storms, all is the fault of Government. In the eyes of the ignorant millions who constitute the peasantry and a majority of the landholders of India, the 'Sircar' (their synonyme for the Government), is to be blessed for good seasons and plentiful crops; and it is but fair, therefore, they think, that it should be held responsible for bad seasons and hard times. Nor is the unreasonableness of such impressions to be made apparent to the uneducated Hindû or Mussulman by any amount of argument. The revenue of India is derived from the land: no other country in the world probably draws so large a proportion of its annual revenue from a direct imposition upon the land. When seasons are good, and the land-tax is

easily paid, it would be hard to convince the ignorant landholder that Government had not something to do with causing these results for its own convenience; and, as a natural consequence, whenever times are bad the Government must bear the blame.

Now, the depreciation of the value of money all over the world, consequent on the immense supplies of gold obtained of late years from California and Australia, as well as upon other circumstances, is a result of which the Indian Government was in no way the cause. But not the less do the ignorant millions of the population ascribe the depreciation directly to Government influence.

II. Contemporaneous with this depreciation in the value of money, has been the development of the gigantic scheme of Indian railways, the opening out of roads between distant parts of the country, and the improvement of the navigation of the rivers, all tending to draw off the surplus production of one province for the support of any other in which there may be a deficiency; and thus the poor improvident cultivators, who are always in debt and never find grain as cheap now as it was before, shake their heads and declare that the arrangements of Government are very bad. It is a common thing to hear the remark made in Oudh, that before its annexation to British India a rupee would purchase fifty or sixty pounds weight of corn, and now not more than twenty or thirty. It would be impossible to persuade the ignorant villager that Government is not responsible for this result. Last year all the surplus crop of Oudh was bought up by

traders, and sent off to Bengal by river steamers, by railroad, by country carts, by country boats—in every possible way. The traders reaped large profits, for there was a scarcity in Bengal, but in Oudh a few large landholders only benefited by the export. The mass of the people saw the corn being carried off, and found prices gradually rising, and shook their heads again, declaring amongst themselves that Government was much to blame. In the time of the King's government in Oudh this would have been impossible. There were no roads to convey the produce to the rivers—there were no railroads—very little traffic on the rivers—and finally, if such an exportation of corn had been commenced, it would most probably have been stopped by imperative orders from Lucknow.

Again, the great public works being carried on all over the country, by funds which native princes would have lavished on unworthy favourites and palace festivities, have given rise to an entirely new class of people, unknown before in India—day-labourers unattached. There were day-labourers before, but all belonging to particular hamlets, or villages, or townships. Now, the day-labourers entertained by the great contractors, for constructing railways, common roads, canals, embankments, and the like, are men attached to no particular villages or townships—they are gradually becoming a new tribe or caste. But they have been withdrawn from field labour, and the landholders feel and resent the change. This, too, in their eyes, is the doing of Government. Wages have considerably risen—partly on this account, partly

because the value of money is being gradually depreciated, and partly because all India suffers now if there is want in any one province, however distant. In so extensive a country it will almost annually happen that some one province is in want. In former times, the people of that province died, and the people of the other provinces enjoyed their own abundance; now, the abundance of one goes to supply the necessities of the other. All these have combined to raise greatly the wages of daily labourers. Twenty years ago, the labourers who got daily an anna and a half ($2\frac{1}{4}d.$) for field labour were content. In the remoter districts of Oudh, two annas ($3d.$) a day is still a fair rate. But on the railways and public works, able-bodied men can get four annas ($6d.$) a day; and, of course, as the intelligence of this high rate of wage spreads through the country, discontent spreads with it. Some one family more adventurous than others leaves its village, goes off to the railways or public works, and is lost to its own township. Others follow the example—not rapidly, as would be the case in Europe, but slowly and gradually and surely—and the landholders are discontented, and murmur at Government once more.

Nor is this an evil that will soon right itself, as in other countries. Brahmins and Rajpoots will not plough, or sow seed, or reap the harvest, with their own hands. They are entirely dependent on their field hands. In their petitions against enhancement of rent, they often state it as a reason why they should be specially exempt from such enhancement, that they cannot work with their own hands—they must culti-

vate through others. It almost makes an Englishman indignant to hear an able-bodied countryman, accustomed to the fields and to agricultural life all his days, urge such a plea; but it is constantly done. We may not be able to understand it with our European ideas; but the Brahmin or Rajpoot considers it a valid plea, looking upon himself as of finer clay than the other castes around him—Koomries, Aheers, Koris, Passis —who cultivate for him, graze his cattle for him, watch his fields for him, and do his errands for him. And these Brahmins and Rajpoots are the landholders. Their holdings may be very small; they may be miserably poor; but they regard themselves as the aristocracy of their native land, and they are recognised as such by all their fellow-countrymen.

It will not do, therefore, to pooh-pooh the matter. It will not do to tell the poor Brahmin or Rajpoot that he must plough, and water his fields, and sow the seed, and reap the harvest, with his own hands. He is of a patient race. He may not curse you before your face; he may depart in silence; but he will die rather than violate his custom, and the custom of his race. And of such men there are millions in India. The subject becomes, therefore, of more importance than it might at first appear to be, when we consider that the field labourers are gradually being taken away from the landholder, who cannot afford to compete with the contractors on the railways and on the public works. It is simply one element in a revolution slowly but surely advancing in India, the signs of which are to be seen wherever an English rupee has penetrated, wherever a railway is being made,

wherever an English church or school is visible, wherever the people have talked of the Punjab and of Oudh, of Rajpootana and of Mysore.

I was walking on a road not far from the Ganges, in one of the districts of Oudh, a few mornings ago. It was very early. I saw a fine specimen of the Hindû race walking along opposite to me. He was tall, slim, elegant in build, pleasing in countenance. He evidently had all his earthly treasures in a little cart by his side, and was accompanying and guarding them, whilst a little boy drove the bullocks attached to the cart. He made me a salaam, which I returned. I then entered into conversation with him, and found him willing to converse. His father, he said, had been in the Company's service long ago, killed before the Mutiny (of course); his father's brother, who was lame, had looked after the cultivation of their little plot of ground. They were Brahmins. His uncle had died a short time ago. He found the cultivation of his little plot of ground would hardly give them all (his wife and children he meant) enough to eat, prices were so high, and labour was getting so dear; and as he had heard of service at Fyzabad, he had sold off everything, and was going off there to try his fortune.

But it will be argued that the rise in the prices of corn and country produce generally must compensate the farmers for the rise in the prices of other things. Their incomes are not fixed salaries. If they have to pay more for labour, for implements, for cattle, for domestic wants, they get more for their corn. This is only very partially true of the mass of the people.

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The large landholders, men of capital, find ample compensation for greater expenditure in the increased value of their harvests. But the vast, the overwhelming, majority of the landholders are petty proprietors, living from hand to mouth, obliged to borrow from the recognised money-lenders even to prepare for a new harvest. In many cases even the very harvests themselves are mortgaged to these money-lenders before the corn is cut. The money-lenders and traders get the greater part of the enhanced value of the crop. That the petty landholders live thus from hand to mouth, and that the great majority of the population are in this condition, is proved by the effects of one bad harvest in any one locality in India. The people starve; they have absolutely nothing to fall back upon. Starvation is the necessary and invariable result of the failure of one crop or of a single harvest, if aid is not forthcoming from some other quarter.

But we hear of immense quantities of silver being used in making up ornaments—of thousands of rupees being buried—of children being murdered for the sake of their silver anklets and bracelets. All this is quite true. There are, even amongst the landholders, *some* rich men—one in ten thousand, perhaps. But the silver stored up, and made in large quantities into ornaments, is the property usually of the merchants and traders, not of the peasantry. Domestic servants of Europeans contrive, out of their wages and out of their plunder, to amass silver ornaments of all kinds, and the persons of their wives and children are the banks on which they store up their savings. But

visit the villagers, the mass of the population, the agricultural portion of the people, and you will find, for the most part, squalor and poverty.

That the rulers and princes of India should have heaped up immense treasures is nothing extraordinary. Their armies lived on rapine. The revenues of the country were usually squandered away in the palaces, or in the building of marble tombs and temples. For the next official year the Indian Government has set apart 238 lakhs of rupees, or 2,380,000*l.*, to be spent upon public works alone, exclusive of railways. Under the native rule double this amount would have been spent in one year upon favourites, court festivities, pageants, jewels, splendid dresses, and unmeaning ceremonials.

It must be remembered, too, that no people are more abstemious than the Brahmins and Rajpoots. On their food they spend very little.

Their religion consists in eating certain food in a certain way, with certain ceremonials, and that food is of the simplest and least expensive kind procurable. Rice, wheat-flour, pease, various kinds of pulse, and a few spices, constitute the staples of their food. They drink only water and sherbet—no spirits, no wines, no beer, no tea, no coffee; they would starve rather than kill a bullock or a cow for food. Their sole luxuries in the way of food are sweetmeats, chiefly consisting of various proportions of milk, sugar, and clarified butter, or 'ghee,' as they call it. The richest of them could hardly eat a rupee's worth of their daintiest food in a day. Consider, then, how absolute must be their destitution, when the failure of a single

harvest will cause absolute starvation amongst hundreds of thousands of them. These Brahmins and Rajpoots of whom I am speaking, who constitute the native aristocracy of India, look with contempt and disgust upon the lower castes, that eat flesh of all kinds—of all kinds except pork. None but the very lowest and the most degraded castes will eat swine's flesh, and both Hindûs and Mohammedans regard the very touch of such men as defilement.

Is it any wonder, then, that the Brahmins and Rajpoots do not sympathise, cannot sympathise, never will sympathise with Englishmen, as long as they remain Brahmins and Rajpoots? As Mr. G. O. Trevelyan well says in his graphic work on 'Cawnpore'—'It is difficult to imagine the horror with which a punctilious and devout Brahmin cannot but regard a people who eat the flesh of cow and pig, and drink various sorts of strong liquors from morning to night. It is at least as hard for such a man to look up to us as his betters, morally and socially, as it would be for us to place amongst the most civilised nations of the world a population which was in the habit of dining on human flesh, and intoxicating itself daily with laudanum and sal volatile.'

Subject to our laws and regulations, the peasant of India enjoys much less freedom than he did under the native sway. Our police are constantly worrying the petty landholders by vexatious interference. 'You must cover this well'—'You must fence that dangerous pond near the village'—'You must register the births of all your Rajpoot children,' may be excellent orders in themselves, but are likely to be greatly abused by

men who are entitled to wear the uniform of the 'Sircar.' The landholder is now met with interference at every turn, whereas under the native rule he was left very much to himself as long as he paid up punctually and fully. That the Rajpoots had got gradually into the habit of murdering their female children, in order to prevent the necessity of exorbitant outlay at their marriages, was well known to the native governments all over the country. But it was winked at in Rajpootana not less than in Oudh. Now the strong arm of British power is stretched forth to protect the helpless female infant from destruction, and we have reason to be proud that it has been done so effectually—but the Rajpoots are not therefore the better pleased with us.

Despotism is what the Hindû was accustomed to. He knew of no other form of government. It was short, sharp, and decisive. It might often be unjust, but fatalism came in to soothe the victim, and he went off with apathy to suffer or to die. But the lengthened procedure of our law courts, the right of appeal from one court to another, the constant reversals of decisions,—these are things very onerous and irksome to the Hindû, which he can by no means understand. He wants a government every officer of which is absolutely supreme within his own sphere. *That* he understands. Nor is the Brahmin or the Rajpoot who attends the court satisfied to find that the evidence of a low-caste *kori* or *chumar* is thought as much of as his own. He can hardly believe such to be the case. He may have heard it, but had a lurking doubt of the truth of the statement

till he found it to be so with his own eyes and ears. He shows his Brahminical threads in vain; his beads are ostentatiously displayed, but to no purpose; and he goes away inwardly dooming us Europeans to the lowest hell. After a little experience, however, he finds it is only one in a variety of counts against us. We cannot eat our dinners, or go out for a walk, or sneeze, or cough, or hold our courts of law, without running our heads violently against the Hindû's prejudices.

III. The very pains we are taking to spread education throughout the country is another element of discontent in the morbid mind of the orthodox Brahmin or Rajpoot. In the large cities, schools and colleges have been established so long that the orthodox Hindû community has had ample time to get accustomed to them, however averse they may have been to them at first. But the whole community knows full well that boys educated in English science never turn out orthodox Hindûs afterwards. They of the old school know well that in these schools and colleges ancient manners and customs are gradually being undermined; the ceremonies which constituted the very breath of life to their fathers, disused or ignored; the tales of Hindû superstition laughed at, and the whole framework of Hindû society gradually revolutionised. And yet we expect them to be grateful to us for establishing these schools and colleges!

The educated and enlightened may amuse themselves by laughing at us; they may hold up the crime of England to abhorrence, as if India were imma-

culate; they may ridicule our dress, our habits, our speech, our convivial assemblies; but they are, in truth, the best friends we have in the country: they know full well that their interests are identical with ours; and although they may often go to the verge of sedition in holding us and our rulers up to ridicule, yet in their heart of hearts they give us credit for good intentions, honesty of purpose, and a courage and bravery in war almost incomprehensible to them.

It is the suppressed imprecation of the villager, who talks to us with joined hands and bowed head, that is truly deadly. The laughter and badinage and sarcasms of the young student of Milton and Shakspeare and the Shasters are all but play in proportion.

It is a mistake to suppose that the direct action of the missionaries is more hateful to the uneducated Hindû than the insidious action of the schools and colleges. Very few of the missionaries are understood by the villagers; and the stolid Hindû is more inclined to laugh at, than to resent, the attacks made by the missionaries upon their religion and their habits. The converts made by the missionaries are few and far between, and shake off Hindûism or Mohammedanism at once and for ever when they become baptized. But, in proportion to the vast masses of the population, these converts are so few, and so wanting in power or influence, that even the most bigoted Hindûs are more likely to treat them with contempt than to feel for them open hatred.

But the reflecting, long-headed Hindû knows that the influence of the school is certain; he knows that the lessons of unbelief learned there are not carried off or banished to a separate building, alienated from all other households, like the missionaries' converts, but enter the very sanctuaries of the Hindû's home and temple, accompanying the Rajah to his durbar, the pundit to his study or his temple, the landholder to his fields, and the village gossip to his customary seat at the well where the peasants congregate when the day's work is over, just as they congregate in an English village at the ale-house or at the blacksmith's forge.

These are some of the causes that have made the Brahmins and Rajpoots all over India, of late years, more and more discontented with our sway. A brooding hatred is gradually being fostered under the influence of this discontent, which, if any accidental circumstances caused it to break out into action, we might find much more formidable than the mutiny of 1857. That was but a mutiny of the native army: this would be a rebellion of the peasantry. But of such a rebellion there is no immediate fear. We never, perhaps, can so far conciliate the aristocracy of Hindûism as to make its members like us, but by good and judicious government we may prove to them that there is far less to be gained by riot or lawlessness than by peaceful perseverance in their usual village labours. They are now at an immense disadvantage for any such outbreak. They are unarmed, without discipline, and without leaders; for the wealthier leaders of native society, as having most to lose, would

almost to a man be with us. But all India has heard that Russia is advancing in Central Asia, and none can adequately picture to themselves how simple or absurd may be the cause that might incite the peasantry of India to rise like one man against their rulers, in a rebellion that could not be quelled without the spilling of seas of blood. It is not yet quite ten years since so simple a matter as greased cartridges became a match to kindle the smouldering embers of an army's sedition.

IV. The comparatively recent rising of the Mohammedan tribes on the North-West Frontier, and the intrigues and seditious assemblies common amongst the Mohammedan population of Patna and elsewhere, have all combined to prove that, however severe the lesson taught by the events of the mutiny, fanaticism is still ready to spring forth in opposition to authority, and that the strong arm of military power alone keeps down the followers of the Prophet in India from rising in open violence. Nor is it in India only that Moslemism is restless, and eager to avenge its supposed wrongs on Christianity. All over the East the fire is smouldering. The combustible materials are collected; every now and then an outbreak occurs here and there, like a flickering flame, to show that the fanning breeze alone is needed to ignite the whole. Now it is at Damascus, anon at Mecca, another time in the Great Eastern Archipelago —the signs of the outbreak and its characteristics being pretty much the same everywhere. The fact is that the Mohammedan population of India is but awaiting feverishly, year by year, the advent of a long-

expected leader in order to burst out into open rebellion. That leader is invested, in their anticipations, with a sacred character, and with mysterious and supernatural powers. But let any one who has drawn the sword for the prophet be successful in his first assault on constituted authority, and with the cry of *deen*! *deen*! the faith! the faith! all India would be in a blaze, and the expected warrior-saint would be seen in the revolter, however contemptible he might otherwise be. The wily Indian Moslem knows how to draw the lethargic Hindû into rebellion, how to conciliate his prejudices and enlist his sympathies. All this was proved during the Mutiny of 1857. The vast majority of the Mohammedans of India are semi-Hindû in their tastes, prejudices, and superstitions.

The conquests of England in India have taught all the various tribes and races by which the country is peopled that it is *one* country. This is a truth which they never knew before. The Sikh in the Punjab on the north-west, and the Bengalee on the north-east, are not less contrasted with each other than are the sturdy tall Hindû of Oudh, full of caste and prejudice, and the small, active, comparatively unprejudiced Tamul on the Malabar coast. Speaking different languages, and so alien in faith the one from the other that what would be holy and sacred to one might be indifferent or hateful to the other, all these various races and tribes are brought by education, enlightenment, and civilisation into one fold. The educated Bengalee and the educated Sikh, the educated alumnus of the Canning College in Lucknow, and the educated native of

Travancore, all alike regard themselves as natives of India, and are all ready to make common cause against foreigners.

There never was anything like this in the history of India before. It is entirely a new feature, and will lead in the future to great results. We can hardly estimate now what those results may be; but of the spread of the feeling itself, and of its general diffusion, wherever enlightenment and education are spreading, there cannot be the slightest doubt. And the Mohammedans, the most dangerous class of Indian citizens, are not slow to take advantage of the feeling. 'Are we not all brothers?' is one of their favourite expressions when endeavouring to excite their Hindû fellow-subjects to discontent in every part of the vast peninsula. Even the foreign expression *fatherland* has been translated more or less successfully into nearly every dialect in India. And the more civilisation and enlightenment spread throughout the country, the more this feeling will spread, surely, certainly, unmistakably.

It must not be supposed that I regard the educated natives as enemies to our rule, because education fosters this sentiment of nationality. Far from it. The great masses of the population, and the aristocracy of the peasantry, in other words, the great body of the Brahmins and the Rajpoots, have no sympathy whatever with their more enlightened fellow-countrymen, regarding them rather as renegades from the simple faith of their country. Here and there one or other of the educated classes might make use of their uneducated brethren as tools to further their own

ambitious schemes, by pretending to show great respect for the ancient faith and its trivial or absurd observances. But, as a general rule, the educated and enlightened would be found on the side of constituted authority. They know that India never enjoyed so much peace, so much real prosperity, before, and, if honest, they will say so. They may murmur at the limited field now open to native ambition, but even that they know is widening year by year; they may delight in writing disparaging articles in their own papers about English pride, and English oppression, and English crime, but history has taught them that there never before was a government in India strong enough to put down sedition and keep peace for a year together from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas. All this they know, and, although they may fancy that things might be much better, yet they are not ignorant that things are really much better than they ever were, either under Mahommedan or under Hindû rule. Besides this, the great majority of them have wandered too far from the absurd faith of their ancestors and its observances ever to regain the affections or respect of the unsophisticated Hindû.

The Sikh, or the Rajpoot of Northern India, without any enlightenment, without any education, serves in our army, or in our police, amongst the Bengalees or the inhabitants of Central and Southern India; and it gradually begins to dawn upon him that the Bengalee and the Mahratta, the Madrassee and the Tamul, are his fellow-countrymen, and that the pale-faces are Christians or foreigners. Now to the Hindû

a foreigner is an object of aversion at least—perhaps, in addition to this, an object of fear or of hatred. Hindûism is not a proselytizing sect or religion. A man must be born a Hindû. He cannot become one. Mohammedanism knows this and is content. The Moslem feels that in India his faith cannot decrease or wane away on account of Hindûism, because Hindûism makes no converts. Hence he compromises with it and is ready to tolerate it. But the Christian missionaries live only to proselytize, and the Moslem hates them and their faith, and all that profess that faith. He is always ready, therefore, to give the right-hand of fellowship to a Hindû of any sect, to any native of India, except a Christian, and thus he promotes, as far as he can, the sense of brotherhood and nationality.

Nor must it be supposed that, because the country has been disarmed, therefore an outbreak or rebellion is impossible. The people would rise at an immense disadvantage, it is true. But, although the native army in Bengal no longer bears the vast proportion which it once bore to the entire armed force in India, yet, in its place, there is an immense body of native police, armed, like the Irish County Constabulary, with muskets and bayonets. It is also well-known that a considerable trade in arms has gone on of late years between the larger towns of the English dominion in India, and the independent, or semi-independent, states of Rajpootana—a trade so large, so considerable, as to call for a recent Act of the Indian legislature to check it and hold it under control.

The Police have none of that *esprit de corps* which distinguished the old Sepoy. They have not the

same advantages, either in their pecuniary emoluments at present, or in their chances of pension hereafter. Much of the dislike of the peasantry to our system of government, and particularly to our administration of the laws, arises from the exactions or extortions of the Police. Yet these very Police would be the first to rise *en masse* against us, in any time of trial. In hundreds of stations scattered over India, the centres, or country towns of districts or counties, the Police constitute the only armed force. They might murder every Anglo-Indian, nay every Christian, in their own district, without difficulty; because, if they concerted the measure amongst themselves, and kept their own counsel, they might do it when every such Anglo-Indian or Christian was asleep or unarmed. In such districts (I speak of those districts or counties in which there are no European troops) they constitute the only guard over the Government Treasury, over the Courts of Law, over the Commissioners' and Magistrates' houses, over the jails, as well as over their own ammunition magazines. Were there any extensive outbreak, then, who can wonder if the Police should proceed first to dispose of the few and scattered Europeans in their own district, and then seize and divide amongst them the contents of the Government Treasury? and each of these Treasuries contains from a lakh (10,000*l.*) to five or six lakhs (50,000*l.* or 60,000*l.*) in hard cash.

I have thus briefly endeavoured to enumerate the various causes of discontent in India, and to show to what these causes of discontent may lead. It

may be asked, what are the remedies? I am not vain or presumptuous enough to suppose that I can point out remedial measures sufficient altogether to obviate or remove these dangers. But one or two suggestions on the subject may not be out of place, in conclusion.

It has doubtless been observed by others, as well as by me, that the people of those provinces in the Bengal Presidency, in which the permanent settlement prevails, took no part whatever in the mutiny of 1857. That permanent settlement of the land revenue was a boon to Bengal, which has caused it to be the most contented, and, as it certainly is, the most prosperous province of India. In the North Western provinces, where the land-tax is increased every thirty years, the mutiny found the greatest assistance and sympathy from the landholders and peasantry. In Oudh, as the most recently annexed province, and therefore the province smarting most under the summary settlement just then concluded, as well as under the evils and delays consequent on our judicial system, the landholders and peasantry rose against us and joined the mutineers, with very few exceptions. Nor was this surprising. The system of appeal prevalent in India, which has been so admirably described by Mr. Kaye, in the first vol. of his History of the Sepoy War, is one excessively distasteful to the Indian people, who are accustomed, as I have said, to despotic power, and to regard an order once given as final and decisive.

The extension then of the permanent settlement of land-revenue in India appears to be one of the best and most effectual means, as it certainly is one of the

most feasible, of introducing contentment and prosperity amongst the agricultural population.

Again, the traders and shopkeepers of India do not bear their full proportion of the burdens of taxation, whilst they derive the greatest benefits from the peace, order, and lawful rule which abound in it. Their gains are great in ordinary times, but in times of famine or scarcity their profits are enormous, and are drawn from the miseries and necessities of the agricultural population. It is right that they should pay a fair proportion of the cost of government. At present they are almost altogether untaxed. How this is to be done, how taxation is to be applied so as to reach the buried hoards and daily gains of the money-changer, and the native banker, and the merchant and shopkeeper, is a very difficult question—a question requiring an intimate knowledge of the daily life and habits of the people, as well as of the history of India, to solve satisfactorily. The Mohammedan rulers forced the traders to pay up large loans at regular or irregular intervals. When Delhi was taken from the mutineers by the British force under General Wilson, in 1857, the bunnyahs, or shopkeepers, were the first to welcome the British soldiers as their deliverers, and were certainly the most hearty and the most honest in their congratulations. Nor is this to be wondered at; they are disliked by the other classes of the community in India, as cheats and as being extortionate. Few of the other classes sympathise with them. The Brahmins and Rajpoots, for the most part, despise and hate them. 'The people of this caste,' writes

Baboo Ishuree Dass, in his 'Manners and Customs of the Hindûs,' 'the people of this caste are very effeminate, and cannot stand hard labour. They are inclined to be corpulent, and this corpulency is observed mostly about the middle part of the body. They are the most avaricious class in the country, and this is well known to all. The lowest piece that passes for money in India is a *cowree* or small shell; there are about two hundred and twelve such shells to a penny, yet when they can, they will not let one of these *cowrees* go. When a beggar comes before their shops to beg, they give him a couple of these *cowrees*.' This is just the description that nine out of every ten of the higher or educated classes in India would give of the bunnyah class.

The great incentive to the police to rise and murder the European inhabitants of any district in times of disturbance, would be the hope of possessing themselves of the government treasury and its contents. This evil might be avoided by having such treasuries only in those stations, or central towns, where European troops are quartered. What the advantage is of having such numbers of government treasuries all over the country, one in every county or district, is not apparent. The revenue, when collected by the officers appointed for that purpose, could easily be sent to the central treasuries indicated; and this would be an economical measure, for numerous small branch treasuries, of little or no use, might thus be abolished, and one great inducement to the rising and outbreak of the district police removed.

In fine, a policy which will conciliate and render contented and prosperous the chiefs and princes, the landholders, and their subordinate cultivators, without stopping the public works, on which so much of India's future prosperity must be based; a policy that will throw the burden of taxation with more fairness upon all classes of the people, and particularly upon the traders; a policy that will remove every temptation to rebellion out of the way of an excitable and irregular military force, spread all over the country, and capable of doing us infinite injury —may do something to ward off the evils that seem to threaten the political horizon of India, and to promote its future prosperity. Might not the employment also of the Sikhs, Rajpoots, Mahrattas, and lower castes in our Indian army, on foreign service, in Ceylon, in New Zealand, at the Cape, in the West Indies; and the employment of Negro and Malay troops in India, also do something towards preventing the possibility of a future mutiny? So much we might surely learn from the Roman tactics; and might not the Sikh or Rajpoot, or Mahratta soldier, who returned to India from foreign service, be thus a source of strength to England in this country, and not of weakness, as he related to the village gossips the greatness and glory of England as seen in other lands, and amongst other races, than their own?

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